

**American Planning Association Great Places in America 2011  
King Street Questionnaire for Submission**

*June 16, 2011*

**1.0 Location, physical features, design, characteristics, and on-going maintenance.**

*(Suggested word length for Section 1.0 responses: 500-1000 words total)*

- 1.1 Size of the designated place (number of blocks for streets; square area for neighborhoods and public spaces).

This application is for King Street in the City of Alexandria, Virginia, from the Potomac River at 0 King Street to the Metrorail station at 1900 King Street. These 20 blocks, stretching 1.1 miles, are the heart and soul of Old Town Alexandria, the city's downtown.

- 1.2 Describe the special physical, geographical, or other distinguishing features or attributes of the area and that contribute to the area's uniqueness and strong sense of place. Please be specific.

King Street has been a Great Street since 1749 when it was first surveyed by George Washington. It has evolved over time as Alexandria grew from a 17<sup>th</sup> century colonial seaport village to a 19<sup>th</sup> century center of trade and commerce to the distinct community integrated with the greater Washington metropolitan area that it is today. Through each new era, King Street has successfully maintained its significance as the commercial center and gathering place of Alexandria just as it was in Washington's time. This accomplishment is the result of active planning efforts to enhance and maintain the street's historic fabric and develop an attractive mix of dining, retail, and other attractions for Alexandrians and visitors alike.

King Street is nationally noteworthy because of its historic authenticity. Much of the street is comprised of 18th and 19th century buildings, preserved through strict architectural and demolition control. Its structures date from many historic eras and create visual variety along the streetscape. There is organic integration of commercial and residential uses along the street.

Anchoring King Street are several notable features. Most obvious is the 333-foot high George Washington Masonic National Memorial, a replica of the ancient lighthouse at Alexandria, Egypt. When designing the Metrorail station in the 1980s, care was taken not to obstruct views of the memorial tower centered on King Street.

Further down King is Alexandria City Hall, an architectural gem that has been the seat of government and site of the city's market since 1753. Market Square, which adjoins King Street, is thought to host the nation's oldest continuously operating farmers market. It serves as a community gathering place for concerts, festivals, and other events year-round.

At the end of King stands the Torpedo Factory Art Center. Built as an armaments factory during World War I, the structure was saved from demolition and converted to working artists' studios in the 1970s. It supports 160 artists and annually attracts 500,000 visitors to King Street.

As a commercial artery, King Street serves as the community's shopping center and gathering place

- 1.3 How well maintained and safe is the place? For example, if there are vacant lots, are they kept clean and well groomed?

King Street is a very secure and well-maintained environment. There are no vacant lots along King Street. The street has a very low vacancy rate (presently 4.2 percent); vacancies are generally re-leased very quickly.

The street's brick sidewalks are carefully maintained by the city's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. In May 2011 King Street was retrofitted with handicapped-accessible curb-cuts. The full length of King Street between the Potomac River and the King Street Metrorail Station will be repaved during June 2011.

King Street has a very low crime rate. The street is constantly patrolled on foot, by bicycle and by police cruiser by the Alexandria Police Department. In addition, the significant street activity from Alexandria residents, workers, and visitors during the day and well into the evening provide additional eyes on the street, adding to the secure environment.

- 1.4 Describe the natural and man-made amenities of the place, such as public art, street furniture, recreational facilities, special landscaping, views, and so forth.

Public squares are a defining feature of King Street, including (eastward from the Metro Station to the Potomac River):

- **King Street Garden Park:** This park is designed around a large metal sculpture with hanging plants designed to evoke a ship's prow, a plow, and a tri-cornered hat. The hanging garden suggests the Victorian-era trellised gardens that once existed in Old Town and represents the street grid originally laid out by George Washington. The park is home to the weekly Upper King Street Farmers Market.  
<http://www.kingstreetgardenspark.org/>
- **Sacandaga Totem:** John Van Alstine's Sacandaga Totem is a 5,000-pound rough-cut granite obelisk with four heavy steel fins welded to a steel plate. The sculpture is mounted on a granite base at the corner of King, Market, and Fayette streets, which intersect to form a small triangular plaza. Benches and soft, ambient lighting contribute to the inviting atmosphere.
- **Market Square:** People who come to Alexandria on Saturday mornings find themselves in a busy plaza where local farmers and artists have been selling their products since 1753. Today, the market offers Alexandrians a way to reconnect to the past, while participating in an ongoing local and national tradition. The square features a small stage and large fountain framed by Alexandria City Hall, as well as artist Jimilu Mason's sculpture "Brio," a freeze-frame of an interpretative dancer. In addition to the Saturday farmers market, the square is the frequent site of public gatherings, performances, and festivals. [http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=12290#Market\\_Square](http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=12290#Market_Square)
- **Torpedo Plaza and Alexandria City Marina:** Located behind the Torpedo Factory at the foot of King Street, Torpedo Plaza has a wonderful view of the Potomac River, with a view far south beyond the Woodrow Wilson Bridge and north past the Washington Channel to the Washington Monument and U.S. Capitol. The Marina is used for both pleasure boat docking and commercial boats, including regular water taxi service, excursions, charters, and dinner cruises. The plaza attracts entertainers ranging from magicians to musicians, and offers snack shops and benches to sit and contemplate the water. <http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=12292#Marina>

Along the way, the streetscape includes the following features:

- Gadsby Lantern streetlights, reminiscent of King Street's historic gas lanterns, which provide a historic ambiance after dark
- Decorative trash receptacles and newspaper dispensers, which are functional yet do not distract from the street's historic atmosphere

- Tree wells featuring street trees that offer shade along King Street, plus seasonal flowers planted by the organization Alexandria in Bloom.
- Centralized electronic parking meters, newly installed in spring 2011, replacing the coin-operated meters formerly located at each parking space

## **2.0 Notable, memorable, and defining characteristics.**

**Please elaborate on your response to Question 2 in the preliminary suggestion for streets and neighborhoods or Question 3 for public spaces.**

- 2.1 Has this neighborhood, street, or public space been a trend-setter for the community, city, region, or state? If so, describe how, including examples.

King Street has been a trend-setter in several ways:

- Historically, it was a model for other Virginia colonial cities, with its compact street grid and central civic block featuring a market square, courthouse, and jail. These were cities designed to accommodate business and trade, with no lands purposefully set aside for parks or other public space. Early boosters sought to connect the city with the growing west (today's Appalachia and Midwest) by building canals, railroads, and roadways. One toll road, Leesburg Turnpike (the modern Virginia Route 7), started its journey westward from the 1900 block of King Street, where the King Street Metro Station is now located. Some portions of Leesburg Pike (all of which is today called King Street within the Alexandria city limits) formed the boundary between the District of Columbia and Virginia prior to retrocession; boundary markers are still visible along this route.
- Alexandria was one of the first cities to integrate its history into its economy, so that it not only attracted visitors but also thrived as a sustainable community. Alexandria's living business district is a distinct model from that of Williamsburg, another Virginia historic community whose downtown was converted into a museum in an earlier era of historic preservation. Today, Alexandria's tourism industry—centered on King Street—helps to sustain the city, with museums, historic inns, restaurants, and retailers side-by-side with businesses that cater to the everyday needs of Alexandrians.
- Alexandria's Torpedo Factory Art Center, at the foot of King Street, was one of the nation's first historic buildings to be rehabilitated into an art center and is a prototype for visual arts facilities throughout the world. In 1969, the City of Alexandria bought the former U.S. Naval Torpedo Station from the federal government, which had served as a government warehouse since the end of World War II. After several years of planning, in 1974 the facility was rehabbed for use as a working artists studio. But early accommodations were sparse, with limited heat in the winter and no air conditioning to temper Alexandria's hot summers. In the early 1980s the facility was completely gutted and outfitted with new electrical, plumbing, ventilation, windows, and flooring. Studios were designed to meet the individual needs of each artist. A mezzanine level was constructed, providing more space for classrooms and studios. Today, the Torpedo Factory remains the working home of over 160 professional artists who work, exhibit, and sell their art. The facility serves another 1,000 cooperative gallery members and 2,000 art students.

- 2.2 Have there been any notable "firsts" to take place in the neighborhood, on the street, or in the public space? If yes, please describe.

There are several King Street "firsts," including the following:

- King Street's Market Square is thought to be one of the nation's oldest continuously operating farmer's markets, open in the same location since 1753. It serves as a primary way Alexandria residents have typically obtained their meat, dairy, fish, fruits and

vegetables. George Washington sent his produce from Mount Vernon to be sold at the Farmer's Market.

- King Street was the site of the first Union and Confederate casualties of the Civil war on May 24, 1861—the day after Virginia secession from the Union. Col. Elmer Ellsworth was shot and killed by James W. Jackson, the owner of the Marshall House hotel, after he removed the confederate flag flying above the inn. Union troops retaliated by firing upon Jackson, killing him. The same day, Alexandria men assembled at the corner of Prince and Washington Street (one block south of King Street) for the long march to Richmond to join Confederate forces. Alexandria would remain occupied by Union forces throughout the remainder of the Civil War.
- King Street is included in one of the nation's first locally designated historic districts, established in 1946. This was the first historic district in Virginia and the first in the Washington region, and pre-dates U.S. government designation of national historic districts. The Alexandria Historic District was subsequently designated a National Historic Landmark in 1966 and a Virginia Historic Landmark in 1968. It was also one of the first cities in Virginia to do urban renewal—on King Street—the counter-movement to which led to enhanced preservation of the city's remaining historic structures. In 1989, the city was the first in the United States to adopt an archaeological protection code, furthering the city's historic preservation objectives.

- 2.3 Provide two or three personal stories or anecdotes that illustrate what sets the suggested neighborhood, street, or public space apart from other places, whether in the same city, region, or state as the candidate area. Include or cite newspaper articles if applicable.

Please see Section 2.5, which describes characteristics that distinguish King Street from other nearby areas, as well as Section 3.1, which provides links to personal stories of persons who have influenced King Street.

- 2.4 Describe the elements that help make the neighborhood, street, or public space attractive to people. What draws people—whether visitors, residents, or workers—to the place (i.e. ground-level retail, restaurants, storefronts, etc.)?

King Street has a distinct identity within metropolitan Washington that offers a vibrant mix of shopping, dining, lodging, and cultural attractions, yet also hosts residences and commercial offices.

Only 14 percent of the 300 retail businesses along King Street and its adjacent blocks are national chains, and 77 percent are independent. Merchants represent two-thirds of these businesses; restaurants, one-third. Retailers run the gamut from clothiers and art galleries to booksellers and drug stores. A global array of cuisines is offered in dining rooms and street-side from American, European, Asian, African, and Latin American restaurateurs.

Much of the commercial office space along the street is located near the King Street Metrorail Station, where a patchwork of industrial land uses has been transformed into a walkable, mixed-use commercial district that is sensitively integrated with the historic district further down King Street. The area boasts competitive rents and a lower-than-average vacancy rate for the Washington region.

- 2.5 List three specific and definable characteristics that distinguish the neighborhood, street or public space from other neighborhoods, streets, or places in the community. What makes your suggested place different and memorable from other places in your community?

Three characteristics distinguish King Street from elsewhere in Alexandria and the metropolitan area:

- **Proximity to water.** Alexandria is seaport community, and the preserved buildings on lower King Street (0 to 300 blocks) provide an important link to the city's maritime history. Many of the buildings closest to the city's Potomac River-front are former warehouses, situated proximate to the many wharves that once lined the waterfront. Many of these buildings had fallen into disrepair by the mid-twentieth century, but were fortunately repurposed into stores, restaurants, and offices as King Street was revived over the past 40 years. Today, King Street remains a linkage between Alexandria's downtown and its waterfront, with the King Street Trolley bus service connecting Metro to the water taxis at the City Marina.
- **Compact urban form.** Alexandria is one of the oldest settlements in the Washington metropolitan region, pre-dating the establishment of the District of Columbia as the nation's capital by more than 40 years. The Old Town neighborhood, and King Street in particular, retain the walkable urban form commonplace when the city was founded in 1749. Still today, King Street merchants serving residents' everyday needs are within easy reach of adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- **Adaptability.** King Street owes its success as a commercial center for over 250 years to its adaptability. The re-utilization of Alexandria's historic buildings over the years exudes adaptive reuse. Seaport warehouses, historic shop buildings, and an armaments factory are today home to restaurants, retail, offices, housing, and an art center. This transition would not have succeeded without active management by the city to preserve historic structures and encourage the significant private investment that has shaped modern King Street.

## 2.6 How does the place reflect local culture or flavor?

There are several ways that Alexandria reflects the local culture:

- Several history museums within Old Town—five of which are located on blocks adjacent to King Street—reflect life in the city over time.
  - Gadsby's Tavern Museum, a circa 1785 tavern and 1792 City Hotel, was the setting for dancing assemblies, theatrical and musical performances, and meetings of local organizations. Gadsby's Tavern was where George Washington celebrated his birthday when he was alive, and continues to celebrate him today with its annual birthnight ball on the eve of his birthday. <http://alexandriava.gov/GadsbysTavern>
  - The Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum was a family drug store and pharmaceutical manufacturer that operated on the site from 1796 until 1933, one of the longest-lived companies in U.S. history. <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/apothecary/default.aspx>
  - The Alexandria Lyceum, a block-and-a-half south of King on Washington Street, opened in 1839 to provide a place for lectures, scientific experiments and quiet reading. It served various other uses over the years and was saved from demolition in the 1970s. Today it serves as Alexandria's history museum. <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/lyceum/default.aspx>
  - The Friendship Firehouse was built in 1855 to house the Friendship Fire Company, Alexandria's first volunteer fire company, organized in 1774. <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/friendship/default.aspx>

- The Athenaeum was opened in 1852 as the Bank of the Old Dominion, and had various uses over the years including Civil War commissary office, warehouse, and church. Today it serves as home to the Northern Virginia Fine Arts Association. <http://www.nvfaa.org/>

These institutions are not historic house museums but rather reflect the commercial, social, and civic history of the city over time.

- King Street's architecture reflects different elements of Alexandria history, from the adapted warehouses near the waterfront that reflect the city's founding as a seaport community to the transit-oriented office buildings at the King Street Metrorail Station that serve the modern city's professional workforce. Notably, many styles exhibited by city building facades were as much as 50 years out of date at the time of construction, owing to a conservative bent away from emerging architectural styles. This conservatism is one of the reasons why Alexandria's historical architecture is so well preserved.
- King Street's commercial offerings reflect the Washington region's professional, upper-middle-class workers, many of whom work for the federal government and enjoy Alexandria's fast commute to Washington. Residents and visitors alike tend to place a high value on authenticity. Old Town touts its offerings as "contemporary hospitality with historic fabric," which emphasizes the neighborhood's historic traditions as well as its eclectic retail and world-class cuisine. There's a wide diversity restaurants, with offerings from around the world and at every price-point. It's a big shift from the early 1970s, when only a couple restaurants called King Street home. Still, the area retains quirky retailers of past eras, including two wig retailers who have thrived on King Street for decades.

### 3.0 Important leaders and community engagement?

*(Suggested word length for Section 3.0 responses: 500-1000 words total)*

- 3.1 Who were the most influential persons in shaping the suggested neighborhood street or public space? Please list and provide a short description of what they did, and the impact, changes, or outcomes that were a result of their efforts, consider persons (distinguished or lesser known) such as elected officials, architects, designers, planners, developers, business people, community leaders, and citizen activists. Include or cite newspaper articles or other sources if applicable.

Several "Living Legends of Alexandria" and other recent media profiles illustrate the personal contributions that individuals have made to make King Street and Old Town Alexandria noteworthy places. These include:

- **Cathal Armstrong**, an Irish chef who chose to base his wide-ranging and highly-praised restaurant empire along the King Street corridor: <http://capitalspiceblog.com/tag/cathal-armstrong/>
- **Engin Artemel**, who led planning efforts to renew Alexandria's waterfront, including development of the City Marina and Torpedo Plaza at the foot of King Street: <http://tisaraphoto.com/legends/Artemel.htm>
- **Willem Polack**, President of the Potomac Riverboat Company, which offers water taxi and excursion boat services from the foot of King Street: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/11/AR2007091101988.html>
- **Franco Landini**, founder of Landini Brother's Restaurant, a mainstay on Lower King Street for over 30 years: <http://www.oldtowncrier.com/personality-profile/680-franco-landini-old-towns-standard-bearer-for-over-30-years>

- **David Martin**, who resurrected Alexandria's New Year's Eve First Night celebration (centered along the King Street corridor): <http://tisaraphoto.com/legends07/Martin.htm>
- **Eula and Melvin Miller**, who fought for civil rights and equal opportunity housing in the King Street corridor and throughout Alexandria: <http://tisaraphoto.com/legends/Miller.htm>
- **Pat Troy**, a King Street-corridor restaurateur and founder of Alexandria's St. Patrick's celebration, the highlight of which is a parade along King Street: <http://www.tisaraphoto.com/legends/InTheNews/Troy.html>
- **Marian Van Landingham**, who led the effort to transform the Torpedo Factory into a world-class arts center: <http://tisaraphoto.com/legends07/vanlandingham.htm>

3.2 What past or present neighborhood, business, civic or other groups have had a prominent or leading role within the suggested neighborhood, street or public space? Describe their role and contributions. Include specific examples

King Street owes its success to a broad coalition of supporting organizations and to the public at-large, as community involvement is a hallmark of planning and governance in Alexandria. Contributors include:

- **Alexandria City Council:** The city's governing body has taken a lead role in enhancing and protecting King Street. Recent efforts include implementation of the King Street Trolley, creation of King Street retail and outdoor dining zones, and refined signing, pricing, and policies for on-street parking. <http://alexandriava.gov/Council>
- **Alexandria Chamber of Commerce:** The citywide business-professional association has taken a special interest in King Street, given its prominence in Alexandria's central business district. It has partnered with the city to clarify and streamline requirements to establish and grow businesses here, particularly given the additional requirements for businesses along King. <http://www.alexchamber.com/>
- **Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association:** This group promotes tourism in Alexandria, emphasizing King Street with its new slogan, "Shop, dine, and celebrate on America's historic main street." Its membership supported the 1 percent occupancy tax that sustains the King Street Trolley and promotes periodic events such as Restaurant Week and the Washington's Birthday celebration. <http://visitalexandriava.com/>
- **Alexandria Economic Development Partnership:** This alliance seeks to build the city's tax base, diversify the economy, and attract and retain businesses and organizations in Alexandria. It boosts King Street as a primary attraction for visitors to project a healthy community image to potential Alexandria investors. As described in Section 4.3, AEDP also plays a special role in attracting businesses to King Street. <http://www.alexecon.org/>
- **Alexandria in Bloom:** Founded in 2010 to keep the city clean and enhance its beauty, Alexandria in Bloom works with the city, residents, property owners, and merchants to clean and plant flowers in 250 tree wells along King Street. <http://www.alexandriainbloom.org/>
- **Alexandria Waterfront Committee:** Advising the city on issues related to the Potomac waterfront, it has been at the forefront of current planning efforts to integrate King Street with enhanced public space on the river and preserve the city's maritime heritage. <http://alexandriava.gov/recreation/info/default.aspx?id=25562>



- **Handcrafted Alexandria:** A collection of 13 businesses along King Street featuring handmade items as well as classes and materials for home handicraft projects. Shops feature a variety of artwork handmade by local artists and art and craft supplies, while galleries showcase glass, ceramics, paint, and metal arts. <http://www.handcraftedalexandria.com/>
- **Old and Historic District Board of Architectural Review (BAR):** King Street is in Alexandria's Old and Historic District, the nation's third-oldest locally-designated historic preservation district. The BAR must approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for all new construction and exterior alterations in the district visible from public streets. The group is a vigilant watchdog ensuring the authenticity of construction along the street. <http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=33280>
- **Old Town Boutique District:** This coalition of specialty retailers along the King Street corridor seeks to attract discriminating shoppers to Old Town. Its members include 28 independent purveyors of home décor, women's fashion, jewelry, beauty, children's apparel, home, food, wine and gifts. <http://www.oldtownboutiquedistrict.com/>
- **Old Town Civic Association:** This association is a vocal advocate for maintaining the livability of King Street by preserving the vibrant historical and residential nature of Old Town. The group has sought to maintain a mix of retail that serves everyday residents and to mitigate negative impacts of King Street visitor traffic. <http://www.oldtowncivic.org/>
- **Upper King Street Neighborhood Association:** Representing the interests of residents closest to the Metro, the fastest-growing residential area in Old Town, this group sponsors a weekly farmers market near the King Street Metrorail Station in season. <http://www.upperkingstreet.org/>

#### 4.0 Role of planning and planners (past and present).

*(Suggested word length for Section 4.0 responses: 500-1000 words total)*

- 4.1 Provide a summary timeline of major events and decisions that contributed to development of the area—origin, transitions, planning decisions, etc.

King Street dates to the founding of Alexandria in 1749. As a British colonial port town the high street was named for the King, but George Washington drew one of the earliest plats of the street. During this early history, the city's waterfront (including King Street) was extended two blocks eastward onto the shallow water of the Potomac River. Warehouses, many of which still exist today, lined Lower King Street, in close proximity to the busy wharves. Further up King lay the city's main commercial establishments, courthouse, and a market square—the only public space set-aside in the nascent town.

In 1801, Alexandria comprised part of Virginia ceded to form the District of Columbia. During this period, the city was known as Alexandria, D.C., but King Street suffered as Congress neglected the city. The City of Alexandria and adjacent Alexandria County (today's Arlington County) retroceded back to Virginia in 1847.

The first casualties of the Civil War occurred at the Marshall House Hotel on King Street in May 1861. The city was occupied by federal troops throughout the conflict, sparing its historic architecture the ravages of war.

King Street evolved as the region grew along with the federal government during the 20th century. The street was the commercial center of a bedroom community, but became a transit-oriented, mixed-use commercial hub in its own right following the opening of its Metrorail station in 1983.



- 4.2 Provide the date and principal author or planner of the earliest available plan that addresses or encompasses the suggested neighborhood, street, or public space. Describe any subsequent plans or planning-related initiatives affecting the suggested location. Please include a short discussion about their significance. Include important or interesting details if possible.

In 1748, George Washington developed the first “plat of the land whereon now stands the town of Alexandria,” effectively the first city plan. According to the Library of Congress (<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/gwm1st.html>), “Washington probably prepared [the map] under the direction of John West Jr., Deputy Surveyor of Fairfax County, Virginia. Washington's half brother Lawrence was among those who petitioned the Virginia Assembly for the establishment of a new town on the banks of the Potomac River. Titled on the reverse in Washington's hand *Plat of the land where on now stands the town of Alexandria*, it displays the locations of several warehouses, shoals, the edge of the navigable channel in the Potomac, and notes on land suitability.”

The following year, Washington penned the second map of Alexandria, which for a brief period was known as “Bellhaven.” According to the Library of Congress, the map shows “the town laid out in eighty-four lots with ten streets. The map may have been used in the sale and distribution of lots that took place on July 14-15, 1749, as indicated by the proprietors' names, lot numbers, and prices paid shown on the right of the plan.”

#### A plan of Alexandria, now Belhaven.



Washington's second map of Alexandria, ca. 1749

Source: Library of Congress/Public Domain: [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/map\\_item.pl?data=/home/www/data/gmd/gmd388/g3884/g3884a/ct000223.jp2&style=gmd&itemLink=r?ammem/gmd:@field%28NUMBER+@band%28g3884a+ct000223%29%29&title=A%20plan%20of%20Alexandria.%20now%20Belhaven](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/map_item.pl?data=/home/www/data/gmd/gmd388/g3884/g3884a/ct000223.jp2&style=gmd&itemLink=r?ammem/gmd:@field%28NUMBER+@band%28g3884a+ct000223%29%29&title=A%20plan%20of%20Alexandria.%20now%20Belhaven)

Alexandria's modern planning dates to the institution of zoning in the 1920s. The first zoning ordinance for the city was approved in 1923 but it did not have a map. In 1931, a zoning district map and zoning ordinance were approved. This map was regularly updated over the years. The earliest zoning map identifies King Street as a commercial zone, one of the main commercial areas in the city.

Later planning efforts incorporated historic preservation. The Old and Historic Alexandria District was created in 1946 after many years of growing interest in historic preservation in Alexandria. The ordinance that created this locally-designated historic district also established a Board of Architectural Review to review all partial and total demolitions as well as any exterior alterations or additions visible from a public right-of-way. Much of King Street was included at the time of designation, as well as the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway (known as Washington Street in the City of Alexandria). The 1946 ordinance was created to “promote the general welfare through the preservation and protection of historic places and areas of historic interest in the City of Alexandria...”

- 4.3 What role have the local planning department or city officials played in the development of the suggested neighborhood, street, or public space?

The City of Alexandria’s Department of Planning and Zoning has had active and continuous involvement in the development of King Street, and it is one of the city’s key planning priorities. Goal 1, Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan adopted by the Alexandria City Council in June 2010 is to “Increase the vitality and economic success of the city waterfront and King Street corridor while maintaining and strengthening the city’s commitment to historic preservation and neighborhood quality of life.”

The Planning Department and city officials have long encouraged economic development along King Street while managing to promote historic preservation and be responsive to the needs of residents and businesses. Initial forays to encourage economic development—1960s urban renewal projects along seven blocks of King Street—destroyed hundreds of King Street’s historic buildings. The reaction to urban renewal was swift and severe, and resulted in a burgeoning interest in historic preservation by residents and city government officials that led to protection of the corridor’s significant remaining historic fabric and redevelopment of the Torpedo Factory into an art center.

Recent initiatives have included the King Street Retail Zone, Outdoor Dining Overlay Zone, and the Old Town Parking Study (detailed in Section 6.1). Another example is the A-frame sign program, which the Planning Department initiated in response to requests from restaurants and retailers off King Street—many of which are smaller “mom and pop” shops—for directional signage.

The Alexandria Economic Development Partnership (AEDP, profiled in Section 3.2) also plays a significant role in bringing business to King Street. Like many other cities’ downtown areas, there’s no cohesive leasing strategy for King Street because of fractured property ownership. Unlike a shopping mall, the retail mix on King Street is not actively managed. AEDP tries to create the mix that local residents want to see here. In addition, since many King Street property owners are not professionals, AEDP plays a key role in marketing vacancies and letting retailers know what space is available here.

- 4.4 How have citizens been included and engaged in planning efforts or related initiatives or programs?

There is nothing the City of Alexandria does that does not involve citizens. Civic issues in Alexandria have been driven by public demands as far back as the 1920s, when the first zoning ordinances were adopted.

Every single one of the policies discussed in Section 6.1 was the result of citizen request or City Council initiation. One example is the Old Town Restaurant Policy, which was the result of citizen involvement. The purpose of the Restaurant Policy is to ensure compatibility with residential uses, so when considering the request of new a restaurant to operate in Old Town the city considers the cumulative impact of noise, odor, trash, and traffic of all restaurants combined so as not to create a food court or restaurant row atmosphere. A similar policy was recently incorporated into the city’s draft Waterfront Small Area Plan.

Standing committees, such as the city's Waterfront Committee, and ad-hoc task forces, such as the Old Town Area Parking Study Work Group, are a hallmark of planning in Alexandria. The city's planning process also includes extensive citizen outreach: to date the city has hosted or participated in over 100 public meetings regarding the draft Waterfront Small Area Plan.

- 4.5 Describe what current changes are underway and what effects are these changes having on the place. Describe any major obstacles that have been addressed or are currently being addressed by the community. Be specific and include examples if possible.

There are several changes currently underway in Old Town. Several recent initiatives include the following:

- The Old Town Area Parking Study is now being implemented, and includes installation of wayfinding signage and smart parking meters. This project follows a major planning effort in which residents and businesses were carefully consulted regarding wayfinding policies and design. The effort aims to welcome visitors but ensure residential access to on-street parking by encouraging utilization of convenient off-street parking options.
- Food carts were recently introduced on King Street's Market Square. This enlivens the square during the midday by providing lunch options for Old Town workers. Initially, this effort was opposed by some residents who feared the program would degrade the square. The city responded by addressing several specific resident concerns and limiting the breadth of the pilot program during its first year so that initial results could be evaluated.
- Installation of handicapped-accessible curb cuts along King Street was recently completed, and a resurfacing of the street from the waterfront to the King Street Metro Station will be completed in June 2011.
- In the coming year, the city will complete access improvements to the King Street Metrorail Station, including a redesign of the station plaza to improve visual cues for pedestrians to access King Street and better manage bus, vehicle, and pedestrian traffic. The proposed alternative improves upon the project's initial design by improving pedestrian flow and mitigating the footprint of proposed bus bays.
- Planning continues on the city's Waterfront Small Area Plan, the first effort to refine the city's vision for its waterfront in a generation. There has been significant debate within the community regarding this plan, but consensus has emerged regarding the importance of developing a continuous public walkway along the waterfront as well as emphasizing arts and history.

All programs seek to protect the character and historic attributes of buildings, striking a balance between economic viability and preservation of the authentic historic character. The cumulative effect of this series of small steps is very big, and the city will continue to pursue incremental improvements to nurture the street.

## **5.0 History, early development, highlights from the past.**

*(Suggested word length for Section 5.0 responses: 500-1000 words total)*

- 5.1 List any local, state, national, historical, or other special designations or awards and the respective dates given in honor of the suggested neighborhood, street, or public space.

On February 15, 2011, Alexandria was designated a 2011 Distinctive Destination by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. This program recognizes cities and towns that offer

an authentic visitor experience by combining dynamic downtowns, cultural diversity, attractive architecture, cultural landscapes, and a strong commitment to historic preservation, sustainability, and revitalization. In each community, residents have joined together and taken action to protect their town's character. Alexandria's award commemorates the independent spirit of the city's many individually-owned businesses as well as its commitment to historic preservation. Alexandria is one of a handful of cities and towns around the country—and the only one in Virginia—to receive the honor. More about this award is posted at <http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/southern-region/alexandria-virginia.html>.

In 2004, Alexandria was selected as an honored community by Preserve America, a national initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the U.S. Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Education; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and the President's Council on Environmental Quality. The Preserve America Community designation recognizes communities that protect and celebrate their heritage, use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization, and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Alexandria was cited in particular for its noteworthy history and significant efforts to preserve it. More about this honor is posted at <http://www.preserveamerica.gov/PACommunity-alexandriaVA.html>.

The three blocks of King Street nearest the Potomac River are within the National Historic Landmark District designated in 1966 (<http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=706&ResourceType=District>). The majority of King Street within Old Town is also within the National Register District designated in 1969 ([http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0121\\_Alexandria\\_HD\\_1969\\_Final\\_Nomination\\_NRHP.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0121_Alexandria_HD_1969_Final_Nomination_NRHP.pdf); [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0121\\_Alexandria\\_HD\\_1984\\_NRHP\\_Addendum.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0121_Alexandria_HD_1984_NRHP_Addendum.pdf)).

The Alexandria City Hall, at 301 King Street, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places ([http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0126\\_AlexandriaCityHallAndMarketHouse\\_1984\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0126_AlexandriaCityHallAndMarketHouse_1984_Final_Nomination.pdf)).

Several individual National Historic Landmarks (NHL) or buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are located within one block of King Street, including:

- The Bank of Alexandria (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0004\\_BankOfAlexandria\\_1973\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0004_BankOfAlexandria_1973_Final_Nomination.pdf))
- The Bayne-Fowle House (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0006\\_Bayne-Fowle\\_House\\_1986\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0006_Bayne-Fowle_House_1986_Final_Nomination.pdf))
- Carlyle House (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0010\\_Carlyle\\_House\\_1969\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0010_Carlyle_House_1969_Final_Nomination.pdf))
- Christ Church (NHL: <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=1052&ResourceType=Building>; NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0012\\_Christ\\_Church\\_nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0012_Christ_Church_nomination.pdf))
- The Fairfax-Moore House ([http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0022\\_Fairfax-Moore\\_House\\_1991\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/100-0022_Fairfax-Moore_House_1991_Final_Nomination.pdf))
- Gadsby's Tavern (NHL: <http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=692&ResourceType=Building>; NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/GadsbysTavernHD\\_textlist.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/register/Cities/Alexandria/GadsbysTavernHD_textlist.htm))

- The Old Dominion Bank Building (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0002\\_Old\\_Dominion\\_Bank\\_Building\\_1980\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0002_Old_Dominion_Bank_Building_1980_Final_Nomination.pdf))
- The Stabler Leadbeater Apothecary Shop (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0106\\_Stabler-Leadbeater\\_Apothecary\\_Shop\\_1982\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Cities/Alexandria/100-0106_Stabler-Leadbeater_Apothecary_Shop_1982_Final_Nomination.pdf))

In addition, The Mount Vernon Memorial Highway, also known as the George Washington Memorial Parkway, bisects King Street along Washington Street in Old Town Alexandria. This National Park facility connects the District of Columbia with George Washington's Mount Vernon estate (NRHP: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Counties/Fairfax/029-0218\\_Mount\\_Vernon\\_Memorial\\_Highway\\_1981\\_Final\\_Nomination.pdf](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Counties/Fairfax/029-0218_Mount_Vernon_Memorial_Highway_1981_Final_Nomination.pdf)).

A summary of all National Historic Landmarks and National Register listings in the City of Alexandria is posted at <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/info/default.aspx?id=29750>.

- 5.2 List and describe any current or upcoming anniversaries or annual events for the suggested place including dates and sponsors of such anniversaries or celebrations.

**Anniversaries:** The city is presently commemorating the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. Alexandria, Virginia had a unique role in the Civil War as its longest occupied territory, trapped for four years in the terrible conflict, a once prosperous Southern town instantaneously transformed into an armed camp behind Northern lines. As noted in Section 2.2, Alexandria was the site of the first union and confederate casualties of the Civil war. Throughout the war, Alexandria was the capital of the Restored Government of Virginia, the Commonwealth's unionist government during the Civil War.

Today, Alexandria allows visitors to experience the conflict for themselves. Telling the stories of Alexandria's citizens as well as the soldiers and officers, nurses, slaves and freedmen who passed through, Alexandria commemorates the 150th anniversary of its unique role as the witness to war and reunion. Notably, the city has incorporated new technologies, such as a Civil War smart phone app, cell phone tours, and geo caches to tell the story of Alexandria's rich history.

**Annual Events:** Please see the detailed list in Section 7.6.

## 6.0 How does the suggested Great Place exemplify planning best practices? (Suggested word length for Section 6.0 responses: 500-1000 words total)

- 6.1 Provide a description of any planning tools used (i.e., historic preservation ordinances; specific-area plans; relevant sections of comprehensive plans; public investments or bond approvals; business improvement districts; tax increment financing; zoning districts or overlays; design guidelines; special use guidance or ordinances; revitalization efforts; etc.) and a short discussion about the results these requirements have had in helping shape how the area has developed, changed, or evolved. Include specific dates and examples if possible.

Today's King Street is the product of colonial city planning, historical circumstance, and—in modern times—proactive planning efforts to preserve and enhance the historic character of the street and its environs. Plans and programs adopted in recent years include:

### Zoning Ordinance

- **Archeological Protection Code:** In 1989 Alexandria was the first city in the U.S. to adopt such an ordinance, which requires evaluation of most development projects to determine the impact on archaeological resources, to reduce the loss of sites and objects of antiquity that represent the cultural heritage of the nation, the commonwealth, and the city. This code is administered by the Office of Historic Alexandria's Archaeology office,

one of the few such local archaeology bureaus in the United States.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/historic/archaeology/default.aspx?id=28146>

- **King Street Retail Zone:** Adopted in 2005 to ensure that King Street continues to function as Alexandria's "Main Street" for residents and visitors alike, this zone creates strategic and flexible zoning for properties along King to enhance its long term vitality. It encourages retail, a balance of residential and commercial uses, and regulatory flexibility.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6960>
- **King Street Outdoor Dining Overlay Zone:** Adopted in 2007 to liberalize outdoor dining, standardize guidelines, and streamline city approvals. Today, most restaurants along King offer seasonal outdoor dining, enlivening the streetscape.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6960>

#### Alexandria Master Plan

- **King Street Metro Station Small Area Plan:** Adopted in 1992, this plan encourages transit-oriented growth in the vicinity of the King Street Metrorail Station, once a location for low-scale warehouses, auto dealerships, and surface parking. Following implementation of the plan, the area thrives with major office complexes, hotels, restaurants, and infill commercial development.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=7498>
- **Old Town Small Area Plan:** Adopted in 1992, this is the city's blueprint for economic vitality and historic authenticity in the King Street corridor. A key component of the plan is the Old Town Restaurant Policy, which seeks to balance shops and dining along King Street. <http://alexandriava.gov/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=7458>
- **Waterfront Small Area Plan:** Adopted in 1984, this plan shaped the initial vision for parks and the Alexandria City Marina at the foot of King Street. What was once a decrepit industrial wharf is today an active marina and pedestrian promenade anchored by several restaurants and the Torpedo Factory Art Center.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/WorkArea/showcontent.aspx?id=7456>

#### Other Studies

- **King Street Retail Analysis:** This 2005 strategy introduced a vision for King Street through principles regarding physical improvements and operational management. It deals with streetscape design, land uses, parking, lighting and other details to create a world-class street. A 2009 analysis of King Street retail found that the area has the opportunity to increase its regional share of retail and restaurant sales by expanding its business mix and implementing a series of policy, marketing, and physical enhancements. The city and its commercial and economic development partners are now implementing this analysis' recommendations.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=6960>
- **Old Town Area Parking Study:** This 2010 study included a comprehensive survey of available public and private parking supply and demand. The study found that the corridor has adequate parking but must communicate to drivers where convenient parking exists. This study has led to changes in on-street parking policies and will be supported by improved wayfinding signage, a coordinated system that directs and informs residents and visitors and establishes design standards, programming, implementation and maintenance. <http://alexandriava.gov/OldTownParkingStudy>

The plans and studies have been completed over many years, and they continue to evolve as new visions emerge. Alexandria continues to re-imagine the connection between King Street



and the Potomac River, with the first new waterfront plan in a generation now underway (<http://alexandriava.gov/Waterfront>).

- 6.2 Describe what efforts are underway to make the street, neighborhood, or public space more environmentally sustainable, including having a smaller carbon footprint. Please include specific examples of practices or steps being proposed and taken.

With a large historic district containing buildings dating back to the 1700's, Alexandria has been pursuing environmentally conscious policies and practices for much longer than it has been trendy to be "green". In a community that takes enormous pride in its history and historic preservation, many buildings have been reused and retrofitted over and over. Notable examples include the Torpedo Factory Art Center, which began as a munitions factory before being saved by community activists who turned it into a center for the visual arts.

It's easy and fun to go green along this extremely walkable street where historic buildings are prized, restaurateurs make a name for themselves using locally sourced ingredients, bookended by two local farmers markets. Public transportation plus a bike-friendly attitude make it practical to avoid automobiles.

Major "green" initiatives include:

- **Eco-City Alexandria:** Alexandria is working to be a city where people can live healthier and economically productive lives while reducing their impact on the environment. Through the city's Eco-City Charter, Alexandria is working to harmonize existing policies, regional realities, and economic and business markets with its natural resources and environmental assets. Eco-Cities strive to engage all citizens in collaborative and transparent decision making, while being mindful of social equity concerns. Alexandria's charter specifically seeks to define over-arching policies regarding land use, water resources, air quality, transportation, energy, green building, solid waste, environment and health, and emerging threats (such as climate change). The charter is supported by a series of action plans that provide concrete steps for implementing the Eco-City principles over near- and long-term horizons. The Eco-City Charter and action plans directly support King Street's smart-growth planning principals (described in Section 6.3) and ensure that they are aligned with other city policies. <http://alexandriava.gov/Eco-City>
- **Walkable Alexandria:** The City of Alexandria was recently recognized by Prevention magazine and the American Podiatric Medical Association as one of the top 100 Walking Cities in America and the Best Walking City in Virginia. Many parts of King Street boast Walk Scores of greater 90 (including perfect scores of 100 on several blocks) indicating the street's excellent walkability. [http://alexandriava.gov/news\\_display.aspx?id=10906](http://alexandriava.gov/news_display.aspx?id=10906)
- **Spin City Alexandria:** With trails along the gorgeous Potomac River, through quaint neighborhoods and nature preserves, Alexandria is a great place to ride a bike. In 2006, the city formally committed to becoming a great place to ride for transportation and fitness. Efforts included adding miles of bikeways and bikes racks (including along each nominated block of King Street), establishing a Safe Routes to School program, and Confident City Cycling classes. As a result, the city was awarded with the bronze-level award from the League of American Bicyclists in 2009. <http://alexandriava.gov/localmotion/info/default.aspx?id=11558>

- 6.3 What 'Smart Growth' principles and practices are used, whether to increase density; reduce use of private cars and expand use of transit or non-motorized travel options; reuse existing buildings; encourage mixed-use development; or other measures? Include a short description including specific examples.



Old Town Alexandria is a model of smart-growth planning principles in action. Alexandria is one of the earliest examples of a city built on a grid without regard for topography. It reinforces the traditional urban framework of a grid with through streets with small blocks, which facilitates pedestrian mobility. This is reinforced by the multimodal transportation options offered along King Street and throughout the city and metropolitan area.

The reuse of existing buildings is inherently sustainable, and since most buildings are historic, most have been adaptively reused. Most buildings on King Street have mixed uses, including street-level retail with offices and/or residential on higher floors.

There's a tremendous amount of green space in Old Town alleyways and back yards. The urban fabric is extremely permeable, with many small spaces along the streetscape.

- 6.4 Is there affordable housing located within the borders of the suggested neighborhood or adjoining the suggested sheet? If yes, please describe them and amount of affordable housing, and the plans, programs, regulations, ordinances, or other initiatives undertaken to bring about the affordable housing.

The four small area plan areas (six census tracts) within a ten-block walking distance of King Street in Old Town include nearly half (975 units) of the city's affordable housing for households earning less than 30% adjusted median income (AMI). There are an additional 375 assisted/market affordable units at 30-60% AMI and 1580 market affordable units at 60-80% AMI in this larger Old Town area, representing about 8% of affordable housing (above 30% AMI) citywide. Seven different public housing complexes owned and operated by Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) are located in the area, and these range in size and structure from a small 15-unit development to a large 170-unit building, including multifamily stacked townhouses, garden style rowhouses, and a high rise elderly complex. In addition, there is an 80 bed homeless shelter, two additional complexes with 22 emergency shelter/transitional housing beds, a second elderly complex of 90 units, a 12-unit complex for people with special needs, a small 8-unit building for elderly residents, and two redevelopment projects that incorporate eight committed affordable housing ownership units in mixed income developments.

One of the nearby public housing assets just 3 blocks north of King Street is the Samuel Madden Homes/Chatham Square redevelopment project, awarded the 2005 Housing Choice and Affordability Award (<http://alexandriava.gov/planning/info/default.aspx?id=9814>) by the National Capital Area Chapter (NCAC) of the American Planning Association for its redevelopment of a public housing complex with a mixed income development that integrates 52 public housing units among 100 market rate townhomes.

Despite these numbers, the city as a whole continues to face a severe shortage of affordable housing. To address this, the city initiated a citywide Housing Master Plan in 2010 to establish a comprehensive vision to guide future development with the goals of preserving and enhancing affordable housing opportunities, community diversity, and economic sustainability. The Plan will include recommendations for ensuring a balanced geographic distribution of affordable, workforce and public housing throughout the city; goals for mixed-income housing; and strategies for affordable, workforce and public housing preservation and production. The city expects to adopt the Housing Master Plan in late 2011.

ARHA is an active partner in the city's affordable housing goals, and owns/manages 1150 affordable housing units. ARHA has completed a number of recent redevelopment projects, such as Chatham Square, described above. ARHA's current project, with development partner EYA, is the redevelopment of the James Bland property six blocks north of King Street. The plan will include demolition of 194 public housing units and construction of 379 new units, of which 134 will be onsite and affordable to households earning less than 30% AMI. The remaining 50 units will be replaced elsewhere in the city, in accordance with City

Council's Resolution 830, adopted in 1981, establishing the city's long term commitment to no net loss of public housing and requiring that any redevelopment of publicly assisted housing must replace all units on a one for one basis.

In addition to utilizing state and federal funds for affordable housing, the city accepts voluntary in-kind (committed affordable rental or ownership units) or monetary contributions from developers to pursue its ongoing objective of preserving and increasing the stock of affordable housing citywide. The city also allows developers to utilize bonus density in exchange for the provision of additional affordable units.

- 6.5 What planning principles are embodied by the designated street, neighborhood, or public space, and how do these principles contribute to the area's outstanding qualities and characteristics?

The planning principles embodied by King Street exude the Smart Growth principles and practices described in Section 6.3 above.

- 6.6 Brief summary of the major or most significant planning lessons learned or involved with the neighborhood, street or public space.

The city's lesson on King Street improvements is that incremental is the way to go, finding greater success making small changes along the way. Every single step since urban renewal has been very small. Many initiatives begin as pilots, allowing a concept to be first tested and then refined. Examples include the A-frame signs, Old Town Restaurant Policy, valet parking on Lower King Street, outdoor dining, Market Square food carts, and initial wayfinding signage, which will emphasize direction to Old Town off-street parking.

## **7.0 Additional information (useful but not required).**

To assist APA staff and contributing authors and editors in developing a technical-oriented report about places selected for designation, answers to the following, and sources of information for the following questions:

- 7.1 For neighborhoods, population density and demographic breakdowns (using U.S. Bureau data)

The data illustrates housing and demographic estimates for the years 2005-2009 from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) for six census tracts utilized to describe greater Old Town (which surrounds the King Street corridor), and the total population estimates for the entire City of Alexandria. Below is a listing of the tract numbers and the areas which these tracts represent:

The City of Alexandria (Total)  
Tract 2019 – King Street (Focused Tract)  
Tract 2016 – Braddock Road Metro Area  
Tract 2018.02 - Cameron Street-Pendleton Street  
Tract 2020.01 – South of City Hall  
Tract 2020.02 – Jones Point Area  
Tract 2007 – Lee Center Area

Total population for the City of Alexandria is 142,131 people according to ACS, of which 51.8% are women and 48.2% are men. The largest concentrations of populations from the census tracts derive from the Lee Center area as well as the Braddock Road Metro area. The King Street area represented the lowest population of all city census tracts presumably because of commercial land uses.

More than half of the city's population is between the ages of 20 to 44 years. Persons under the age of 18 accounted for the lowest percentage of the population for the City of Alexandria

at 19%. The median age for the City of Alexandria is 35 years of age. The median age for the census tracts ranges from 33.6 to 48.6 years of age.

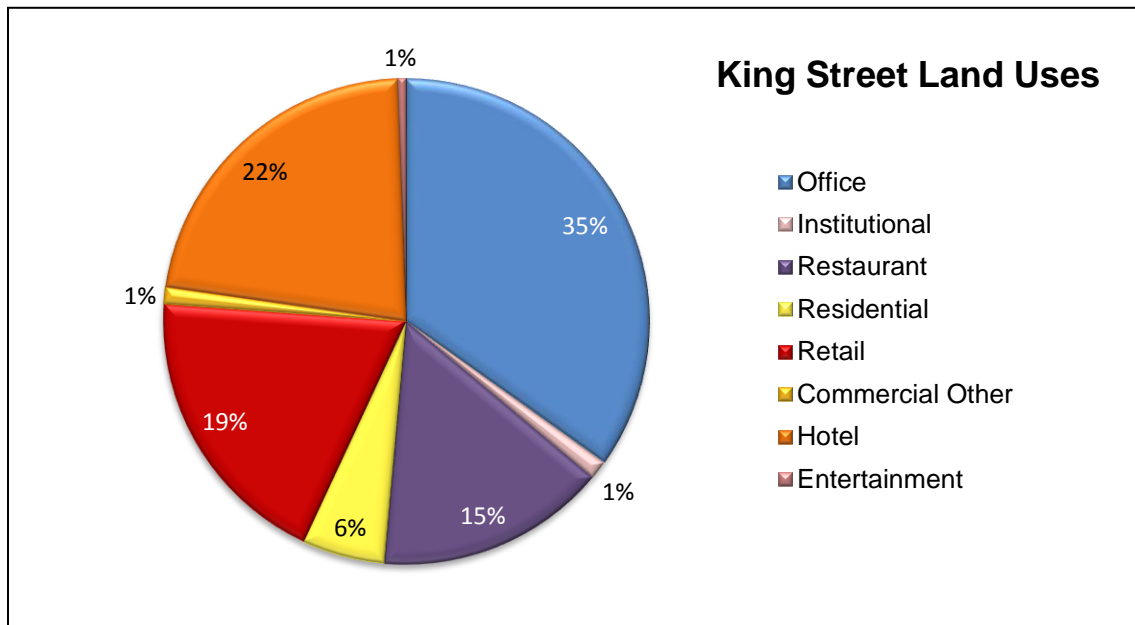
Regarding ethnicity, for the City of Alexandria and the greater Old Town census tracts, white and black demographics accounted for the largest percentages of total population at 64.5% and 21.8% respectively. Latinos and Asians are the next largest demographic subpopulations represented in the city as well as the census tracts.

#### 7.2 For neighborhoods and streets, average home prices and rents

Housing data for the City of Alexandria and the greater Old Town census tracts (defined in Section 7.1) illustrate that more people own homes and pay a mortgage than those that rent. The greatest percentage of home values ranges from \$500,000 to \$999,999 dollars. This accounts for more than 40% percent of the owner occupied units in the city as well as the largest home values range for the respective census tracts. The second largest category of home values ranges from \$300,000 to \$499,999 dollars in the city as well as the census tracts. The median dollar value of homes in the City of Alexandria was is roughly \$490,000. With the exclusion of the Braddock Metro area census tract, the median dollar home values of the remaining tracts is greater than \$500,000. Concerning occupied rental units, the largest rent values ranged from \$1,000 to \$1499 for the entire city at 46.7%. Rent values of \$1,500 or more were the largest represented for the greater Old Town census tracts.

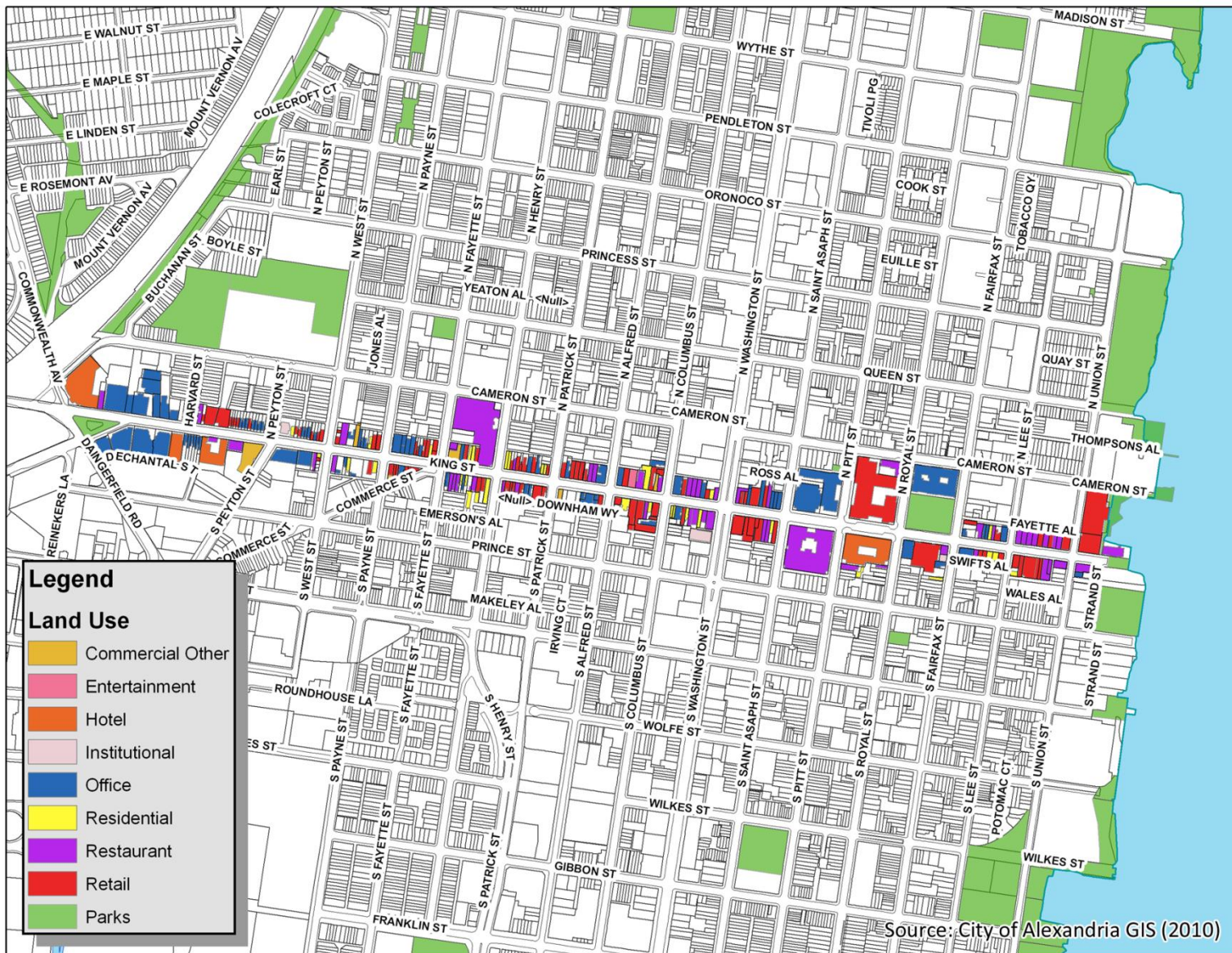
#### 7.3 For neighborhoods and streets, a list of the various uses occurring within the designated area and approximate percentages of each use

The following graph summarizes the aggregate square footage of each use according to City of Alexandria Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data:



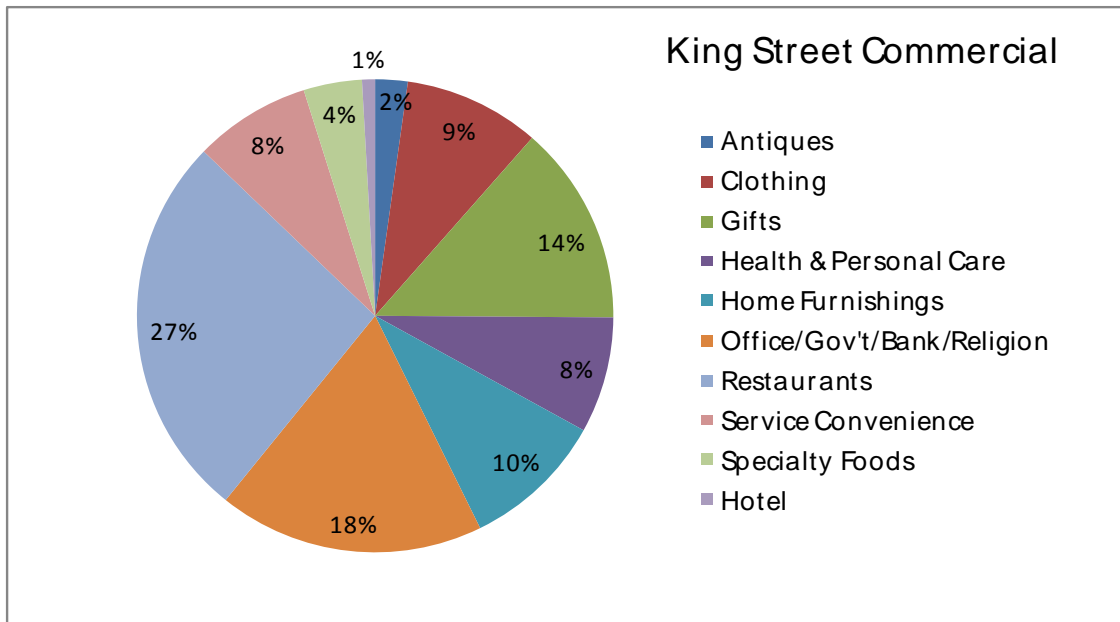
Source: City of Alexandria GIS, 2010

The following map illustrates the mix of land uses along the nominated portion of King Street as of 2010 according to Alexandria GIS data:





The following graph summarizes the mix of commercial uses by storefront along the nominated portion of King Street as of the second quarter of 2011, according to the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership:



Source: Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Q2 2011

#### 7.4 Estimated number of annual visitors of a public space or estimated annual traffic counts for streets

There are several estimates of annual visitors to King Street:

- Over 3.3 million guests are estimated by the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Authority to visit the City of Alexandria; a large percentage of these visitors are to Old Town Alexandria and the King Street corridor
- Over 800,000 are estimated by the Alexandria Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (TES) to ride the King Street Trolley over the past year
- Over 600,000 are estimated by the Alexandria Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities to visit Torpedo Plaza at the Alexandria City Marina in the 12-month period from June 2010 to May 2011
- Over 500,000 are estimated by the Torpedo Factory Artists Association to visit the Torpedo Factory Art Center over the past year
- Approximately 125,000 passengers ride the Potomac Riverboat Company's Alexandria to National Harbor Water Taxi annually

TES has estimated peak-hour pedestrian traffic flows at the corner of King Street and Washington Street, one of the busiest intersections in Old Town:

- Weekday AM Peak: 203
- Weekday PM Peak: 603
- Saturday Peak: 1,569

The Virginia Department of Transportation

([http://www.virginiadot.org/info/2009\\_traffic\\_data\\_by\\_jurisdiction.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/info/2009_traffic_data_by_jurisdiction.asp)) provides the following 2009 estimates of average annual daily traffic (AADT) and average annual weekday daily traffic (AAWDT) within the nominated portion of King Street:

- Fairfax Street to Washington Street (300-600 blocks): 4,900 AADT; 5,300 AAWDT
- Washington Street to West Street (700-1300 blocks): 8,200 AADT; 8,700 AAWDT

- West Street to Russell Road (1400-1900 blocks): 17,000 AADT; 18,000 AAWDT

7.5 Types of transit modes and connections, and accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, other non-motorized users (especially for streets and neighborhoods)

King Street's geometry has created a model walkable urban community. By design, King Street's blocks are compact with inviting brick sidewalks, serving large volumes of peak-hour pedestrian traffic. It was a model for other Virginia colonial town centers, and remains one for today's neo-traditional cityscapes.

The busiest Alexandria Metrorail station is at King Street, used by an average of 8,700 riders daily. This transit hub is served by Metrorail, local and regional buses, and Virginia Railway Express commuter rail. Notably, while the station serves all of Old Town and is the City of Alexandria's primary transportation hub, the station is named "King Street," recognizing the street's prominent role as the city's primary commercial axis.  
([http://www.wmata.com/rail/station\\_detail.cfm?station\\_id=48](http://www.wmata.com/rail/station_detail.cfm?station_id=48))

At the other end of King Street, a water taxi connects Alexandria to National Harbor, Maryland (<http://www.potomacriverboatco.com/national-harbor.php>). The City Marina also offers berths for pleasure boaters as well as operators offering excursion, charter, and dinner cruises along the Potomac (<http://alexandriava.gov/Marina>).

The King Street Trolley links Metro and the waterfront, with frequent stops in between. The free service operates daily from mid-morning to late evening. The trolley operates on 20-minute headways and features four separate narrated tours of the city's history. The trolley annually attracts 800,000 riders (<http://alexandriava.gov/Trolley>).

Bisected by the 18-mile long Mount Vernon Trail (<http://www.nps.gov/gwmp/mtvernontrail.htm>), King Street has excellent bike access to Mount Vernon, Washington, D.C., and Alexandria's West End. Bicycle parking is offered on every block.

7.6 List of functions occurring at the public space, along the street or in the neighborhood each year (i.e. markets, rallies, parades, festivals, protected habitat, community events, etc.)

**Weekly Events:**

- **Old Town Farmers Market:** Old Town Alexandria's Market Square is thought to host one of the nation's oldest continually operating farmer's markets. Each Saturday morning year-round, purveyors of meat, dairy, fruits, vegetables, plants, breads, and crafts hawk their wares next to Alexandria City Hall, originally built to house the market.  
<http://alexandriava.gov/FarmersMarket>
- **Upper King Street Fresh Farmers Market:** This Wednesday evening market in King Street Garden Park, near the King Street Metro Station, offers area residents and commuters the opportunity to shop for fresh, locally grown produce, meat, dairy and bakery items. <http://www.upperkingstreet.org/farmersmarketfrontpage.htm>

**Annual Events:**

- **First Night Alexandria:** "The largest, safest, family-friendly, budget-friendly New Year's Eve celebration through the performing arts in the greater Washington metropolitan area," presents more than 100 performances along the King Street corridor and throughout Old Town. The event culminates at midnight with music and fireworks at the base of the George Washington Masonic Memorial, one of King Street's primary anchors.  
<http://www.firstnightalexandria.org/>

- **George Washington Birthday celebration:** As Washington's hometown, Alexandrians have celebrated the birthday of George Washington since the Revolutionary War. This President's Day weekend festival features music, historic reenactments, and a birthnight ball. The centerpiece is the Washington's Birthday parade, the nation's largest commemorating Washington, a portion of which runs along King Street. <http://www.washingtonbirthday.net/>
- **St. Patrick's Parade:** The Ballyshaners, Gaelic for "Old Towners," annually present one of the nation's earliest St. Patrick's Day celebrations, on the first Saturday in March. This parade runs along much of King Street and features floats, bands, horses, dancers, and dogs. <http://www.ballyshaners.org/>
- **Friendship Firehouse Festival:** This block-long street festival held annually on the first Saturday in August celebrates the history of one of the city's historic firehouses and the role that firefighting has played in shaping the city. <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/friendship/default.aspx?id=35960>
- **Alexandria Festival of the Arts:** This annual juried show features painting, drawing, sculpture, textiles, and other artworks. Booths line six blocks of King Street from the Potomac River to Washington Street. The event is held annually during the second weekend in September.
- **Scottish Walk:** This parade commemorates Alexandria's Scottish heritage during the first weekend in December. The walk, which includes a portion of King Street, features Celtic clans and holiday cheer. <http://www.scottishchristmaswalk.com/>

**Other Events:**

- Market square is the frequent site of public gatherings, performances, and festivals, including the Armenian Festival, the Old Town Arts and Crafts Festival and Volunteer Fair, the Alexandria Citizens Band concerts, and holiday events such as the city's tree and menorah lighting ceremonies.

7.7 Please provide a list of supplemental sources of additional information about the previous questions, such as archival sources, historians, community organizations or persons who have been instrumental in planning and shaping the designated area.

Supplemental sources of note include:

- **Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning:** <http://alexandriava.gov/Planning>
- **Alexandria Library Local History/Special Collections:** <http://www.alexandria.lib.va.us/branches/lhsc.html>
- **Office of Historic Alexandria:** <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/>
- **Alexandria General History:** <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/info/default.aspx?id=28112>
- **Alexandria Archaeology:** <http://alexandriava.gov/historic/archaeology/default.aspx?id=39146>

For more on Alexandria Planning, contact:

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- 7.8 Please provide links to maps, graphs, charts or other visual materials specific to the designated place and the salient characteristics, qualities, features and traits that contribute to its unique sense of place and selection as one of the Great Places in America. All images sent should be high resolution, i.e. as 300 dpi or 600K8-1.2M8 files. Maps of areas should be sent as TIFF files, also at a resolution of 300 dpi. In addition, we need to have a signed permission-to-use form for each individual image provided with the suggested place. See separate attachment to this form (make additional copies as needed).

Please see attached file summarizing additional graphic materials.